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HOUSE MEMORIAL 29

48TH LEGISLATURE - STATE OF NEW MEXICO - SECOND SESSION, 2008

INTRODUCED BY

Ben Lujan

A MEMORIAL

URGING THE NEW MEXICO CONGRESSIONAL DELEGATION TO SUPPORT THE
FEDERAL EMPLOYEE FREE CHOICE ACT.

WHEREAS, in 1935 the United States established by law that
workers must be free to form unions; and

WHEREAS, the free choice to join with others and bargain
for better wages and benefits is essential to economic
opportunity and good living standards; and

WHEREAS, unions benefit communities by strengthening
living standards, stabilizing tax bases, promoting equal
treatment and enhancing civic participation; and

WHEREAS, states in which more people are union members are
states with higher wages, better benefits and better schools;
and

WHEREAS, unions help raise workers' pay and narrow the

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1 income gap for minorities and women by increasing median weekly
2 earnings by thirty-one percent for union female workers,
3 thirty-six percent for African American workers, forty-six
4 percent for Latino workers and eight percent for Asian American
5 workers; and

6 WHEREAS, workers are also more likely to have health
7 coverage and guaranteed defined-benefit pensions in union jobs;
8 and

9 WHEREAS, eighty percent of private-sector union workers
10 have employer-provided health insurance compared with only
11 forty-nine percent of nonunion workers, and sixty-eight percent
12 of union workers have defined-benefit pension plans compared
13 with fourteen percent of nonunion workers; and

14 WHEREAS, workers across the nation are routinely denied
15 the freedom to form unions and bargain for a better life, with
16 twenty-five percent of private-sector employers illegally
17 firing at least one worker for union activity during organizing
18 campaigns; and

19 WHEREAS, seventy-seven percent of the public believes it
20 is important to have strong laws protecting the freedom of
21 workers to make their own decisions about having a union, and
22 sixty percent of workers would join a union if they had the
23 chance; and

24 WHEREAS, employers often refuse to bargain fairly after
25 workers form a union by dragging out first-contract bargaining

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1 for up to two years in forty-five percent of successful
2 campaigns; and

3 WHEREAS, each year millions of dollars are spent to
4 frustrate workers' efforts to form unions, and ninety-two
5 percent of private-sector employers force employees to attend
6 mandatory anti-union meetings; and

7 WHEREAS, when the right of workers to form a union is
8 violated, wages fall, race and gender pay gaps widen, workplace
9 discrimination increases and job safety standards disappear;
10 and

11 WHEREAS, a worker's fundamental right to choose a union
12 without coercion and intimidation is a public issue that
13 requires public policy solutions, including legislative
14 remedies; and

15 WHEREAS, the federal Employee Free Choice Act received
16 majority support in both houses of congress in 2007 but was
17 defeated by a minority of senators; and

18 WHEREAS, the Employee Free Choice Act will safeguard
19 workers' rights to make their own decisions about forming a
20 union, provide for first-contract mediation and arbitration and
21 establish meaningful penalties when employers violate workers'
22 rights;

23 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF
24 REPRESENTATIVES OF THE STATE OF NEW MEXICO that it support the
25 Employee Free Choice Act, which would authorize the national

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1 labor relations board to certify a union as the bargaining
2 representative when a majority of employees voluntarily signs
3 authorization cards designating that union to represent them;
4 and

5 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the house of representatives
6 support first-contract mediation and arbitration and the
7 establishment of meaningful penalties for violations of a
8 worker's freedom to choose a union; and

9 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that members of the New Mexico
10 congressional delegation be requested to support the Employee
11 Free Choice Act to protect and preserve for America's workers
12 their freedom to choose for themselves whether or not to form a
13 union; and

14 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that copies of this memorial be
15 transmitted to the New Mexico congressional delegation and to
16 the governor.

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